

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for cutting a specimen having a trimmed surface with a microtome or ultramicrotome, comprising the steps of:
  - providing a knife holder for a knife and a specimen holder for holding the specimen,
  - 5 using a feed device for producing a relative motion between the knife and the specimen, the specimen,
  - ascertaining in a trimming apparatus the spacing between the trimmed surface of the specimen and the specimen holder,
  - transferring the spacing to the cutting device, and
  - 10 inserting the specimen holder into the cutting device.
2. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the measurement of the spacing between the trimmed surface of the specimen and the specimen holder is sensed in a trimming device.
3. The method as defined in Claim 2, wherein the spacing is sensed during the motion of a milling cutter.
- 15 4. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein after trimming, the specimen is inserted together with the specimen holder into the cutting device and the specimen holder abuts against a stop.
5. The method as defined in Claim 3, wherein the motion of the milling cutter is sensed with a spindle drive, a stepping motor with step counter, and/or a servomotor.
- 20 6. The method as defined Claim 1, wherein the trimming apparatus and the cutting device are coordinated with one another in a learning mode.

7. The method as defined in Claim 6, comprising the steps of:
- setting a defined spacing between the trimmed surface of the specimen and the knife in the cutting device; and
- storing the defined spacing.
- 5 8. The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the cutting device is equipped with a travel measurement system that has a zero mark; and the zero mark is moved to upon activation of the cutting device.
9. A microtome or ultramicrotome for cutting a specimen, comprising: a knife holder for a knife and a specimen holder for holding the specimen, a feed device for producing a relative
- 10 motion between the knife and the specimen and a travel measurement system for measuring the change in the spacing between the knife and the specimen holder.
10. The microtome or ultramicrotome as defined in Claim 9, wherein a device is provided for transmitting the spacing, ascertained in a trimming device, between a trimmed surface of the specimen and the specimen holder.
- 15 11. The microtome or ultramicrotome as defined Claim 9, wherein the travel measurement system encompasses a spindle drive, a stepping motor with step counter, and/or a servomotor.
12. The microtome or ultramicrotome as defined in Claim 11, wherein a zero position can be stored in the travel measurement system.
13. The microtome or ultramicrotome as defined in Claim 11, wherein microtome or
- 20 ultramicrotome is embodied in such a way that the zero position can be moved to upon activation of the cutting apparatus.

14. A system for automatically presetting a specimen onto a knife in a microtome or ultramicrotome, the system comprising: a travel measurement system for measuring the change in the spacing between the knife and the specimen holder, a device for transmitting the distance, ascertained in a trimming device, between a trimmed surface of the specimen and the specimen holder, and the trimming device is coupled to the cutting device in such a way that the spacing ascertained in the trimming device is transmitted to the microtome or ultramicrotome.
15. The system for automatically presetting a specimen as defined in Claim 14, wherein the microtome or ultramicrotome and the trimming device are connected with a data line or wirelessly.
- 10 16. The system for automatically presetting a specimen as defined in Claim 14, wherein the trimming device and the cutting device move to a zero position upon activation.